

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1 ~~1.~~ A system for testing a performance capability of a user drop in a  
2 communication network, the system comprising:  
3 ~~AT~~ a host terminal coupled to the user drop via the communication network,  
4 wherein the host terminal is operable to:  
5 provide a test signal to the user drop; and  
6 authorize access to the test signal; wherein authorizing access to the  
7 test signal is based at least in part upon receiving a network sign-on identifier via the user  
8 drop.

1 2. The system of claim 1, wherein the test signal is a video signal, the  
2 system further comprising:

3 a network video signal source to generate the video signal.

1 3. The system of claim 1, wherein the test signal is a data signal, the  
2 system further comprising:

3 a network data test source to generate the data signal.

1 4. The system of claim 1, wherein the test signal comprises a data signal  
2 and a video signal, the system further comprising:

3 a network video signal source to generate the video signal; and

4 a network data test source to generate the data signal.

1 5. The system of claim 1, the system further comprising:  
2 a network entitlement controller arranged to identify a test device coupled to  
3 the user drop.

1 6. A method for testing a performance capability of a user drop in a  
2 communication network, the method comprising:

3 coupling a test device to the user drop, wherein the test device comprises a  
4 sign-on identifier that identifies the test device;

5 receiving a test signal at the test device, wherein the test signal is received at  
6 least in part based on the sign-on identifier; and

7 measuring the test signal to determine the performance capability of the user  
8 drop.

1 7. A method for implementing performance capability testing of a user  
2 drop in a communication network, the method comprising:  
3 providing access at the user drop to a test signal from a central office;  
4 receiving a network sign-on identifier at the central office, wherein the  
5 network sign-on identifier identifies a test device; and  
6 authorizing access to the test signal by the test device.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the test signal is selected from the  
2 group consisting of a data test signal, a video test signal, and a VDSL test signal.

1 9. The method of claim 7, wherein the test signal is a combination of two  
2 or more of the following signal types: a video signal, a data signal, or a VDSL signal.

1 10. The method of claim 7, wherein at least a portion of the test signal is a  
2 video signal, the method further comprising:  
3 providing a video test source, wherein the video signal is produced by the  
4 video test source.

1 11. The method of claim 7, wherein at least a portion of the test signal is a  
2 data signal, the method further comprising:  
3 providing a data test source, wherein the data signal is produced by the data  
4 test source.

1 12. A method for testing a performance capability of a user drop in a  
2 communication network, the method comprising:  
3 coupling a test device to the user drop;  
4 receiving a signal at the test device via the user drop, wherein the signal  
5 comprises a first signal type and a second signal type; and  
6 measuring the signal to determine the performance capability of the user drop.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the first signal type is a video signal  
2 and the performance capability comprises a video performance capability.

1 14. The method of claim 13, the method further comprising:  
2 coupling a display to the test device, wherein the video signal is displayed.

1 15. The method of claim 12, wherein the test device comprises a network  
2 sign-on identifier that identifies the test device, and wherein the signal is a test signal  
3 received at least in part based on the sign-on identifier.

1 16. The method of claim 15, the method further comprising:  
2 signing on to the communication network using the network sign-on identifier,  
3 wherein signing on provides access to the test signal.

1 17. The method of claim 16, wherein the first signal type and the second  
2 signal type are selected from the group consisting of a data test signal, a video test signal, and  
3 a VDSL test signal.

1 18. The method of claim 12, wherein the first signal type is a data test  
2 signal and the performance capability is a data performance capability.

1 19. The method of claim 12, wherein the communication network  
2 comprises a DSL-based video and data communication network.

1 20. A system for testing a performance capability of a user drop in a  
2 communication network, the system comprising:  
3 a test device; wherein the test device comprises a user drop port, at least one  
4 input/output port, and is configured to test the performance capability of the user drop;  
5 wherein the user drop port is configured for receiving information via the user  
6 drop; and  
7 wherein the input/output port is configured to provide access to the test device  
8 via an external input/output device.

1 21. The system of claim 20, wherein the test device is configured as a set-  
2 top box with a unique type and subtype value stored therein.

1 22. The system of claim 20, wherein the input/output port is an output port  
2 associated with an MPEG video decoder and the external input/output device is a display.

1 23. The system of claim 22, wherein the input/output port is a first  
2 input/output port, the system further comprising:

3 a second input/output port for connecting a personal computer to the test  
4 device, wherein commands from the personal computer are received by the test device via the  
5 second input/output port.

1 24. The system of claim 22, wherein the input/output port is a first output  
2 port and the external input/output device is a first external input/output device, the system  
3 further comprising:

4 a second output port associated with an MPEG video decoder and and the  
5 second external input/output port is operably coupled to a video recorder.

1 25. The system of claim 20, wherein the external input/output device is a  
2 personal computer and wherein the input/output port provides for receiving commands from a  
3 personal computer.

1 26. The system of claim 25, wherein the test device is configured by  
2 commands received from the personal computer.

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